Spotlight on Excellence

By Barbara Honegger, Senior Military Affairs Journalist
Naval Postgraduate School

The Naval Postgraduate School FORCEnet Innovation and Research Enterprise (FIRE) team received a Department of the Navy Information Management (IM) and Information Technology (IT) Excellence Award for 2007 at the DON IM and IT Conference, hosted by the DON Chief Information Officer.

The award was presented on Jan. 31 to Shelley Gallup Jr., NPS associate research professor of information sciences, the team's experimentation and analysis project lead, by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Information Management and Technology and Deputy DoD CIO Dave Wennergren and acting DON CIO John Lussier.

FIRE is a groundbreaking collaborative Web portal supporting knowledge management (KM) and decision making for real-time planning, execution, analysis and reporting of large-scale Navy and DoD experiments. The partially automated enterprise system uses non-proprietary off-the-shelf software and hardware to provide accurate, secure and assured information to authorized Navy, DoD and coalition users worldwide, including those at sea. Web-enabled users anywhere in the world can log on, see the database and graphics, and participate in collaborative decisions.

The award citation reads: "The Naval Postgraduate School's FORCEnet Innovation and Research Enterprise team has significantly advanced the Navy's management of knowledge and effectiveness of decision making in large-scale experiments, such as the Naval Network Warfare Command (NNWC) Trident Warrior series, the Navy's premier FORCEnet sea trial…".

"It was a great thrill for me personally to receive this award on behalf of our group," said Gallup, a former surface warfare officer and 1986 NPS graduate in space systems operations. "It shows that a very small group working hard to produce useful, reliable results can have a very large impact."

According to Gallup, stacks of nominations were received, but Lussier, the acting DON CIO, said that FIRE clearly stood out on top. Gallup also noted the central role that NPS played in Navy experimentation.

"For eight years NPS has played a key role with the Navy in planning, analyzing and reporting on the technology, tactics, techniques and procedures in large-scale naval experiments, and throughout the conference many of the people we've worked with in past experiments had all heard of our FIRE efforts, which means the word has carried very far," Gallup said.

FIRE is the first Oracle enterprise application to work on the Navy Marine Corps Intranet, NIPRNET and SIPRNET, and non-NMCI networks.

"The secret to FIRE's success is exploiting the best of the best database, portal and collaborative software to provide a rigorous structure that forces people to do certain things in a certain sequence in a certain way that ensures the experimentation process is well-planned, well-executed and well-reported," said knowledge management team co-leader and research associate

Shelley Gallup Jr. receives a DON IM and IT Excellence Award from acting DON CIO John Lussier, and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Defense for Information Management and Technology and Deputy DoD CIO Dave Wennergren.

professor of information sciences Randy Maule, the key technical expert implementing the system's architectural vision.

"The big change with FIRE is that what started out as physical note pads, lots of phone calls and travel evolved into a real-time collaborative system accessible to anyone with access anywhere in the world," Maule said.

According to Gallup, the history of large-scale naval experimentation management can be divided into "before FIRE" and "after FIRE."

"Before FIRE, constructing the goals, design, execution, data collection, results analysis and documentation of complex experiments was exceedingly manpower intensive and time consuming, because there was no set structure and little or no automation."

FIRE uses a seamless, comprehensive methodology to provide a single authoritative structure that makes the experiment management, data collection, analysis and report development faster and easier with far fewer personnel because everything is done via the Internet. The system significantly increases participation and shared understanding among as many as 200 planners, and the results of analyses are now available in half the time that they were before.

"To date, FIRE has contributed to moving experimentation of new technologies, such as ship-to-ship laser communications, closer to becoming programs of record, as well as transitioning programs of record such as Automated Digital Network System and Common Chat Line, a real-time translation tool, into fleet acquisitions," Gallup said. "Also, the Rapid Technology Transition acquisition cycle has become truly rapid, cut by about 75 percent, down to two to three years."

In addition to Gallup and Maule, the other members of the award-winning team are senior mentor and KM team co-leader Professor Emeritus and former physics department chairman Gordon Schacher; senior mentor and technical writer retired Navy Capt. Jack Jensen; database software developers, information sciences research faculty member Bryan McClain and research associate Diane Smith; associate professor of information sciences Bill Roeting; and data analysis assistant Sharon Prichard. Naval Surface Warfare Center Corona, Navy Reserve teams,

and the Pacific Science & Engineering Group Inc. also provided experts for research and experimentation.

"Gordon Schacher is really the prime mover behind FIRE," Maule said. "He was the original director of the NPS Institute for Joint Warfare Analysis where this experimentation innovation began."

CHIPS

2008 DON IM/IT Excellence Awards

The call for nominations for the 2008 Department of the Navy Information Management/Information Technology (IM/IT) Excellence Awards will be announced by a DON Info Alert (electronic newsletter) and naval message in fall 2007. The purpose of these awards is to recognize superior quality of IM/IT projects, teams and individuals helping to transform the Navy and Marine Corps through information technology.

DON teams and individuals of all ranks, rates and grades are eligible to apply for an award. A combination of team and individual awards will be presented. Team awards will be presented to project teams, process/product teams and working groups. The team must include government civilian or military employees, but may include contractor personnel as well. Representation from the other services on joint projects involving the DON is welcome. Individual awards will be presented to government civilian or military employees.

Individuals and teams that meet one or more of the following criteria will be considered for an award:

- Superior leadership skills, delivering results that ensure the organization is working toward common solutions, and aligned to the DON IM and IT strategic vision (as defined in the DON IM and IT Strategic Plan for FY 2006-2007 available at http://www.doncio.navy.mil);
- Innovative use of IM/IT while not duplicating existing projects, systems or solutions;
- Significantly improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization in delivering its mission;
- Significant achievement in advancing the DON's vision to manage knowledge to enable effective decision-making, increase the efficiency of task accomplishment and improve mission effectiveness;
- Significant contributions that enable information assurance or critical infrastructure improvements;
- Significant contributions to the recruitment, retention, and training of the IM/IT workforce.

Awards will be presented during the DON IM and IT Conference scheduled for Feb. 4-7, 2008, at the San Diego Convention Center, 111 West Harbor Drive, San Diego, Calif.

To sign up for the Info Alert and receive the 2008 call for nominations, go to the DON CIO Web site at http://www.doncio.navy.mil, click on Info Alerts and News on the left side of the screen, or call (703) 602-6274 for more information. Details about the conference will be announced in the coming months in CHIPS and by a DON Info Alert.

CHIPS

Last Known Yeoman (F) Laid To Rest

By Sophie Platt, Naval Historical Center Public Affairs

Charlotte Louise Berry Winters, the last known Navy Yeoman (F) and woman veteran of World War I, was laid to rest March 30 in Frederick, Md. Winters died at the age of 109 on March 27. Her funeral was attended by an honor guard, pall bearers, and firing party from the Navy Ceremonial Guard, along with family and friends.

Vice Adm. Nancy E. Brown, Joint Staff director for Command, Control, Communications and Computer (C4) Systems, presented the casket flag to the family.

After enlisting in 1917, Winters served at the Washington Navy Yard in Building 57, current home of the Naval Historical Center. One of the last Yeoman (F)s to be discharged in 1919, she was immediately hired by the Navy as a civilian employee to fill her active-duty job.

"Ms. Winters was a trailblazer, one of a relatively small group of women to serve in our Navy during World War I. She did so honorably and nobly, helping through that service to bring freedom to millions of people all across Europe and hope to thousands of young women all across America," said Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Mullen.

"She and her shipmates answered the call when the nation needed them most. They worked hard. They struggled. They persevered, and they set a shining example. And, as in Ms. Winter's case, some stayed on to prepare the Navy to fight and win yet another World War. They were patriots, and we will remain forever in their debt," Mullen added.

Winters was a founding member of the National Yeoman (F) veterans' organization, and served as its eighth commander from 1940-1941.

The Yeoman (F)s, popularly called 'Yeomanettes' to their objection, were established by Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels in 1917 after the U.S. entry into the war.

At the time the Navy and Marines were the only branches of the U.S. armed forces to enlist women to serve in a similar status with men. The expanding Navy and Marines had a dire need for more clerks and stenographers, while also needing to free male Sailors and Marines for fleet duty. Recruited at first just for clerical duties, by the end of the war their jobs included language translators and munitions workers in factories.

Records show that 11,000 Yeoman (F)s, 1,713 female nurses and 269 women Marines (Marinettes) served in World War I. For many years they, along with Army nurses, were the only women eligible to join the American Legion, and the only ones eligible to receive a bonus voted to veterans of World War I.

The Yeoman (F)s were of such invaluable service to the country that there was no question of women returning to Navy service during World War II as the WAVES (Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service).

The success of the WAVES in turn paved the way for the 1948 permanent establishment of women in the Navy. So, not only did the Yeoman (F)s provide exceptional service during World War I, they set a standard of excellence for women in the U.S. military which is carried on today.

The Naval Historical Center has more information on the "Yeomanettes" at http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/prs-tpic/females/yeoman-f.htm. For more news from the Naval Historical Center visit http://www.news.navy.mil/local/navhist/.

This article has been edited from the original which appeared on Navy NewsStand March 30, 2007. Go to Navy NewsStand at http://www.navy.mil for more news from around the fleet.

CHIPS